

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for her time and assistance during a brief telephone conversation on November 28, 2005, during which the promotion of allowable material from a dependent claim to its base claim was suggested as a possible approach to advance the prosecution of this application.

Claims 1-23 were examined. Claims 1-3, 13, 19 and 23 were rejected, while claims 4-12, 14-18 and 20-22 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim. In response to the above-identified Final Office Action, Applicants incorporate allowable material from claim 5 into independent claims 1 and 23, cancel claim 5, and adjust claims 6-9 to depend upon claim 1 instead of claim 5. Reconsideration in view of the amendments and the following remarks is requested.

I. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 13, 19 and 23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,613,048 issued to Chen, *et al.* ("*Chen*"). Among the limitations of the rejected claims, an operation of "merging the direction maps in order to generate a merged direction map" was said to be anticipated by *Chen's* operations on interpolated correspondence maps relating corresponding points or line segments within a pair or set of images (*see Chen* at c. 4). Applicants' proposed amendments detail steps involved in merging the direction maps: the direction maps are rotated according to an initial condition of merging, and direction vectors are arranged and merged to generate the merged direction map. This added material is taken from dependent claim 5, which the Examiner noted would be allowable in combination with the limitations of its base claim. The resulting method is different from any process taught or suggested by *Chen*. Consequently, Applicants believe that independent

claims 1 and 23 are patentable over the prior art of record, and respectfully request that the rejections of those claims be withdrawn.

Claims 2, 13 and 19, also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by *Chen*, depend upon claim 1 and are patentable for at least the reasons discussed above. Applicants request the withdrawal of these rejections as well.

II. Claims Rejected Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claim 3 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious in view of *Chen (supra)*. However, claim 3 depends upon claim 1, which was shown to be patentable over the references of record in the preceding discussion. For at least the reasons explained there, Applicants submit that claim 3 is also patentable over the references of record, and ask that the Examiner withdraw this rejection.

III. Allowable Material

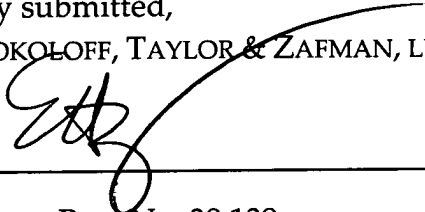
Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has determined claims 4-12, 14-18 and 20-22 to contain allowable material.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is believed that all claims now pending, namely claims 1-4 and 6-23, patentably define the subject invention over the prior art of record, and are in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited at the earliest possible date. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference would be useful in moving the application forward to allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned at (310) 207-3800.

Dated: January 18, 2006

Respectfully submitted,
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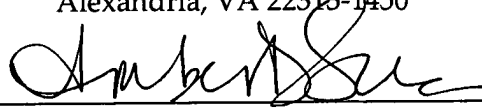
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 1/18/2006

Amber Saunders

January 18, 2006